

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 004754

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: LETTER FROM THE DEFENSE MINISTER TO SECDEF ON THE  
SEAHAWK SALE AND EXIM FINANCING

REF: ANKARA 4517

1. On August 11, 2005, Embassy received the letter in para 2 from the Turkish Ministry of National Defense. In it, Defense Minister Gonul requests SECDEF's support for extension of the 1990 EXIM Bank facility for the sale of military helicopters to Turkey. This extension is a condition of the sale of 12 Sikorsky Seahawk helicopters for the Turkish Navy (reftel). Embassy is pouching the original to OSD/ISP/EUR (LtCol Joe Collins).

2. BEGIN TEXT.

Ankara 09 August 2005

H.E. Mr. Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense

SIPDIS  
USA

Dear Mr. Secretary

During my visit to USA, in June, I could not have a chance to meet with you, since you were abroad. However; I had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with your deputy, Mr. Gordon England. I hope you accept my invitation and we will be able to come together in Turkey.

If you will recall, in June 2002, the Export-Import Bank of the United States ("Ex-Im Bank") approved an extension of the U.S. Export-Import Bank special loan guarantee facility established in 1990 to December 15, 2002 by recognizing the strategic cooperation between our two countries. The \$ 1.366 billion facility has enabled Turkey to expand its helicopter fleet through the acquisition of over 100 helicopters, providing a significant enhancement to existing Turkish Armed Forces' maritime, utility, and special operations capabilities. The BLACKHAWK helicopters being flown by Turkish Armed Forces, were acquired using funds under this credit facility.

Several factors have necessitated the availability of this facility to be extended since its establishment in 1990. One such extension enabled us to procure the above-mentioned BLACKHAWKs. In addition to BLACKHAWKs, 8 naval helicopters have been procured by a further extension of the availability of the 1990 facility.

With your support in 2002, the third extension of the availability to May 15, 2008, we were able to sign a contract with a U.S. company for 12 naval helicopters using the remaining funds in the 1990 facility. Because the period of performance for this contract falls outside the window of the provisions of the facility, it will be necessary to request a final extension from the Export-Import Bank. I solicit your support in ensuring that the provisions of the Export-Import Bank facility do not interfere with our need to obtain this critical capability that effectively supports naval operations as a coalition partner in Operation Active Endeavor (OAE) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). These helicopters will also be engaged in Exercise Reliant Mermaid with the U.S. and other partners and will play a pivotal role in Operation Black Sea Harmony as well as continuing to provide protection of our Sea Lines of Communication and the Turkish Straits. Our Navy also requires the 12 naval helicopters to help protect the approaches to the terminus at Ceyhan, Turkey, of the pipelines carrying Caspian and Iraqi oil to the world.

On July 26, 2005, upon authorization receipt by the Minister of State in charge of the Undersecretariat of Treasury, a final extension request to December 31, 2009 has been presented to Ex-Im Bank. Meanwhile, we would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Credit Agreements has to be executed on or earlier than December 24, 2005, in accordance with the effectivity conditions of the contract for 12 naval helicopters.

We look forward to your support to ensure that we can obtain these critical assets and there by increase our level of engagement in ongoing allied mission and future exercises necessitated by today's environment.

Sincerely yours,  
M.Vecdi GONUL  
Minister of National Defense  
Republic of Turkey

END TEXT.  
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